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CORRESPONDENCE.

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NO. III.

Concluded from page 406.

OF THE MORAL CONDUCT AND PRECEPTS OF THE APOSTLES.

In the Catholic epistle of Barnabas, translated by Archbishop Wake, among his "Apostolical Fathers," it is said that when Jesus chose his apostles, who were afterwards to publish the gospel, he took men who had been very great sinners, that thereby he might plainly shew that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; *οὐ γὰρ ἵνα ἀνομοῦντας*; or as Origen expresses it, *extat sani Barnabæ catholica epistola scriptum, ad apostolicam functionem eligisse homines omni iniquitate iniquiores*, the most abandoned rascals he could pick up. Barnabas, living as near, if not nearer to the apostolical times than any of the ancient fathers now extant, had probably a good right to judge in this respect

At the very commencement of their profession, after the death of their master, these apostles appear to have set about cajoling the people into selling their property and giving it to the apostles for distribution. Going herein a step farther than Jesus Christ, who, when he was asked by a rich man, "what shall I do to be saved?" said "sell all thou hast and give it to the poor." The apostles said, sell all you have and put it under our care for distribution; exactly the language of the modern clerical swindlers, missionaries, bible beggars, &c. who always substitute themselves for the Lord; and who, when they say, give to the Lord, mean, give to me for the use of the Lord.

This scheme of the apostles was manifestly intended to enrich themselves by imposing on the credulity of their followers. It was then, as it is now, "Godliness is great gain." Acts iv, 32, &c. That they might carry this nefarious plan of plunder into more perfect execution, they contrived to punish Ananias and Saphira, who had the impudence to reserve a small part of their own property from the grasp of these apostles, Acts v, 1—13. See also, 1 Cor. ix, 1—17.

The Apostle Paul, (the real founder of Christianity) is exhibited as an unprincipled and time serving prevaricator; and where necessary to his interest, an unblushing liar through the whole of his career. As

to his contradictory account of the circumstances of his conversion, compare Acts ix, 7, with xxii 9. As to his contradictory behaviour respecting circumcision, see Acts xv, 10—19, compared with Acts xvi, 3. After having abused the high priest, he pretended not to know him, Acts xxiii, 3. In Acts xxii, 26, he pretended to be a Roman; in Acts xxiii, 6, he pretended to be a Pharisee, as his parents before him were, and that he was taken up on that account; whereas, at that very moment, and ever since his conversion, he had put off his Jewish character, had remonstrated against the Jewish rites, and had become the Apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. See Acts xv, 10—19, and xvi 3, *ub. sup.*

The real cause of his being taken up, was not that he was a Pharisee, but a Christian; and for preaching doctrines contrary to those of the Pharisees and Jewish law. When it was convenient to him to throw off the burthen of Jewish ceremonies, in order to conciliate the Gentiles, whom he had taken under his peculiar protection, he did so, as in Acts xv. But when it was expedient to dissemble, and to judaize, for the purpose of cajoling the Jews, he made no scruple of doing so; see Acts xxi, 26—28; and his professed plan of deception in 1 Cor. ix, 20—23, where this system of fraud is openly boasted of.

Look at the commencement of the epistle to the Galatians, where, in verses 16—24, he calls God to witness that he did not go to the Apostles at Jerusalem, while in Acts ix, there is a particular account of his visit to them at Jerusalem, and his stay with them there.

That Paul made his disciples maintain him well, and that he took frequent occasions to inculcate the obligation of their doing so, appears from almost all his epistles. When he could contrive to live plentifully on the credulity of his disciples, he did so; before his conversion, he was a mere handicraftsman, a tent maker: afterwards he lived at his ease, and worked only when he saw the shew of labor would conduce to his reputation, as at Corinth. All this sufficiently explains, that St. Paul, as well as the other Apostles, had a very substantial motive for preaching the gospel. While Christ lived, his brethren did not believe a syllable of his pretensions; but after his death, when they found that they could travel about with their wives and mistresses,* at other people's cost, they took up the trade too. See their sarcastic advice to Jesus, John vii, 4—5, and compare it with 1 Cor. ix, 5. In doing this, they only pursued the direction of Christ, who recommended them to live at free cost, Matt. x, 9; Luke ix, 4; 1 Gal. vi. 6; Thess. v, 12; Philip iv, 16.

These passages, which the reader who wishes to get at the truth should peruse carefully, strongly tempt us to believe, that Jesus, if such a man there was, was an ignorant impostor; who disliking his father's trade of a carpenter, set up as a reformer, and a demagogue: raising a party among the poor, the ignorant and the vulgar, by reviling the opulent, the well educated, and the persons in authority. Subsisting in a

* The words which our translators use "a sister, a wife," has been regarded as being intended sarcastically by St. Paul; the readings are either *ἀδελφὴν ἢ γυναῖκα περιπατεῖν* or *ἀδελφὰς γυναικας περιπατεῖν*, sisters, wives; or sister wives, as the other Apostles, the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas did. This was a very comfortable mode of travelling with a female companion, at the expense of the new believers.

great measure on the liberality of weak women, who "ministered their substance to him;" inculcating an overstrained morality, that if practised would sap the foundations of all national prosperity, and personal protection; decrying industry, frugality, foresight, and prudent accumulation. Exercising great caution, even in performing his pretended miracles; refusing to perform them before men of sense and intelligence, when called upon for this proof of divine mission; to which on other occasions, he confidently appealed. See, in confirmation of these charges, Mark viii, Matt. xii, Luke xi, compared with his answer to the disciples of John, Matt. xi. Manifestly desirous of being deemed the Messiah, but constantly evading a direct assumption of that character. Matt. xi, 16,—xx, &c. Always ready to perform miracles in secret, and before the ignorant multitude, but evading them under circumstances that would put all doubt at rest. It appears that his own family and relations, those who knew him most intimately, longest, and best, gave no credit to his pretensions; Matt. xiii, 51; Mark vi, 1—5; Luke iv, 54; John iv, 44,—vi, 42,—vii, 5; and that he died as a malefactor with the full consent of the populace, who preferred saving Barabbas the robber, to saving Jesus. He died, leaving few disciples behind him, except those who determined to subsist on the credulous. All the facts of his life mark out the course of an impostor.

As to his *Apostles*, it is sufficient to peruse the account in the Acts, which tells of their preaching up a community of goods—a common stock of wealth, of which they claimed to be the distributors; of their contriving to punish Annanias and Saphira, even for a slight breach of this most outrageous regulation, without opening our eyes to the true characters of these men, and detesting equally their motives and their conduct. Motives that guile the conduct, not merely of our missionary beggars, our tract society beggars, our bible society beggars, our clerical beggars of all descriptions, but of the clergy generally. A class of men whose profession is to obtain money under false pretences; who palm upon the world forgeries for truths. A class of men, beyond all doubt, the most useless, the most ignorant, the proudest, the most conceited, the most intolerant and bigotted, the most avaricious, ambitious, cunning, daring, and persevering, that at this day pester and disgrace human society. I speak not of individuals; many of them are good, and kind, and honest, and liberal, and well meaning: because they have not considered the reality and depth of the imposture they have been brought up to believe and inculcate. They are good, not in consequence, but in spite of their profession; they are good naturally, and education has not yet completely spoiled them. But I speak of the class, of the order, genus and species; and what I say, I believe to be true.

Of the Apostle Paul, I have said not all, by a great many, of the disgraceful things to which his history will naturally give rise; but enough. This man, not Jesus Christ, was the real founder of the Christian religion. Almost all the unintelligible doctrines, and persecuting precepts of this religion, are drawn from the writings attributed to St Paul, who constituted himself the Apostle of the Gentiles, who do not appear to have been embraced in the scheme of reform projected by Jesus, if he himself says truly, "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt.

xv, 24. So in Matt. v, 17, 18, "Think not I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil; for verily I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled: whoever therefore shall break one of these commandments, and teach men so, he shall be least in the kingdom of heaven." How, after this, Paul could declare to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians, that they were absolved from the law, and that Christ was sent to redeem them that were under the law, can only be defended by those who are paid for defending contradictions, and who can with equal ease, when necessary, "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." See Gal. iv, 1—24, iii, 23; Rom. iii, 19, vi, 14, 15; 1 Cor. ix, 20, 21; Gal. v, 18.

I proceed to shew as an immoral act in those who knew, or ought to know better, that Jesus Christ and his Apostles did not merely leave uncontradicted, but did actively countenance, and sedulously propagate the most gross and vulgar SUPERSTITIONS; namely, the supernatural character of many common diseases, and the demoniacal possession of human bodies by evil spirits, so that the most common disorders that any modern physician is well acquainted with, were fraudulently made the subjects of miraculous pretention and exhibition. If Jesus Christ *did not* know the real nature of these possessions, he was an ignorant and superstitious man, on whose doctrines and opinions no reasonable reliance can be placed. If he *did* know it, he was a deceiver and impostor. The cases related are, the cure of a man possessed of an unclean demon, Luke iv, 33, Mark i, 23. The casting out of many devils, Matt. viii, 16; Mark iv, 34; Luke iv, 41. They were all charged not to declare that he was the Messiah, although his mission, if a real one, was in that character; and the pretention was manifestly made a great secret, on purpose that they might be tempted to tell it. Persons vexed with unclean spirits cured, Matt. iv, 24; Luke vi, 18. The demoniac at Gadara, Mark v, 2, Luke viii, 27. The demoniacs of the Gergesenes, Matt. viii, 28, in which also is related the story of the herd of swine, not quite accordant with our common notions of justice and propriety; but common honesty, and theological honesty have always borne very distinctive characters; they are not easily confounded. The casting out of the dumb devil, Matt. ix, 33. Another, Matt. xii, 22, Luke xi, 14. The demoniac daughter of the Syrophenician woman, Mark vii, 24. The casting out of demons by strangers, in the name of Jesus, Mark ix, 38, Luke ix, 49, which he approved and authorized.

To those who at this day believe in the reality of a system of demons, or evil spirits, who are permitted to roam about, to enter into human bodies and inhabit them, and to be the causes of epilepsy, lunacy, and other disorders; devils that have the power of talking, acting, conversing and disputing while in the human body, and independent of the man whom they inhabit—to persons, if any such there be at this day, so believing, I have no objection to urge; ignorance so besotted is incurable. But of those who disbelieve all demoniacal possession, I would ask, is it consistent with honest views and intentions, to gain the credit of working miracles, by thus fostering and playing upon the superstitions of the populace? By pretending to cast out devils from persons who had none

in them? Would it not be more consistent with good faith and common honesty, to have said, "my friends, these are common disorders, and frequently within the power of medicine to cure." An impostor would not have thus spoken; neither did Christ or his Apostles: but an honest man would. At any rate, we may surely ask was it necessary for him to deceive his disciples, who *privately* enquired of him, why *they* could not cast out a demon who possessed a child, and to tell them gravely, "this kind (of demons) can come forth by nothing but prayer and fasting." The child was manifestly epileptic, if we are to believe the account; what will physicians say to this prescription of prayer and fasting? which by analogy to the case recorded Mark ix, 29, *they* will have to administer. Either lunacies, epilepsies, dunnness and hysteria are cases of demoniacal possession, or Jesus and his Apostles were stupidly ignorant, or they were cunning impostors. The cases told admit of no further alternative. Let Mr. W. and his friend choose.

The Apostles and their companions seem to have gone farther: they cured a damsel who had a spirit of divination, and who by that spirit cried out, "these men are the servants of the most high God," Acts xvi, 17. Is there any person at the present day (I beg pardon of Mr. Walsh, and his friend, I must except them) who will pretend to believe in a spirit of divination? In a distinct and separate demoniacal being, inhabiting the body of a female, and in that situation soothsaying for the profit of her master? Yet such is the representation made by the author of the Acts of the Apostles! Yet is this silly falsehood said to be the dictate of divine inspiration, and recorded for the edification of us poor weak mortals! Is it not so Mr. Walsh? Answer, thou penner of paragraphs for the use of true believers, to curry favor with the old women, male and female, who patronise the National Gazette! Thou Guerilla Chieftan of the petite guerre of Bigotry! Thou puny pet champion of fashionable Orthodoxy! Answer this, like an honest man, if you are able.

Jesus and his Apostles preached, and seemingly believed, that the *world would be at an end during the existing generation*, and that he would himself descend from heaven, and reign upon earth. The fact prophesied has not even yet come to pass. Was this ignorance or dishonesty? There is no other third supposition that *can* be made. See Matt. xxiv throughout, and in particular to verse 34; Mark xiii throughout, particularly verse 30; Matt. xvi, 28; Luke xxi throughout, particularly verse 32; John xxi, 22. To the same purpose, St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, iv, 14—18. These passages declare in clear and unambiguous language, that the disciples to whom they were addressed, should not all die till the end of the world should happen, when Jesus would come in the clouds and translate them to Heaven.

The support given in John v, 2, to the story of an angel being employed to descend at stated periods, and communicate a sanative quality to the pool at *Bethsada*, is another instance of support afforded to the falsehoods of vulgar superstition, of itself quite sufficient to destroy the credit of such a narrator.

Such are the remarks on the Gospel Morality, which the silly panec-

gyrics of Mr. Walsh and his clerical friend have induced me to arrange, and which they may refute, if they are able. I submit them to the consideration of your readers, and of every sincerely honest man in the community. The true precepts of morality, deduced from the relations of man toward man, as a social animal—based on the broad foundations of equal and general utility, are the affairs of every man in society. The great precepts of morality, by which society is to be governed, and which alone it is the duty of society to sanction, are plain, true and useful: founded alone on our duty to our neighbor, and his duty to his neighbor. Precepts which have nothing to do with religion, nor religion with them. Those rules of social conduct, which are best calculated to produce the greatest good of the greatest number, constitute the only true MORAL CODE. Morality is the code of laws best fitted for our existence here, where we live in society with each other, and obligatory only because they are in fact best fitted to promote the mutual happiness, on equal terms, of the members of society. Our social compact extends through this life only; we make no contract about another. Religion embraces the views of our existence in another state after death: it is founded on selfish wishes and expectations; on hopes, at best very dubious; and on our fears of offending a being, whom the Christian Scriptures depict as a proud, selfish, cruel, inexorable, jealous, wavering Tyrant, punishing where it is impossible for him to be injured, and furious against the poor and weak creatures whom he has, for his own good pleasure, condemned to crawl, for a certain time, on the surface of this earth; why we were created, 'tis hard to say; for the facts that occur, seem plainly to indicate the presence of a careless, wanton, and cruel being, as the governor of the universe, if any governor, separate from the universe itself, there be, or by possibility can be. So prevalent is vice and misery over goodness and happiness, and so manifestly is it our duty to wage eternal war with the natural propensities which are made to form a part of, and essentially belong to the animal Man!

In submitting these remarks, it is manifest that I can possibly have no motive but to present just views, and to elicit truth. I can have no prospect of gain or advantage by them. The falsehoods propagated by the adversaries of my opinions, are those by which they are maintained in luxury and ease; by which they acquire and maintain weight and importance in society; by which they exhibit practically and triumphantly, that bigotry is the high road to respect and influence, that it is the duty of religious zeal to be intolerant, and that godliness in all its forms is great gain.

TRUTH.

RELIGIOUS ABSURDITIES.

MR. EDITOR,—Having been long accustomed to think and reason for myself, I have been led to examine, by the light of Nature, the various systems of religion set up and established by men, at different periods of the world; and although I have heard a multitude of arguments, apparently cogent, advanced by the respective advocates of almost every doctrine in Christendom, yet, when viewed with candor, and scrutinized by the eye of reason, assisted by the light of Nature, I have never been

able to discover any thing in them calculated to ameliorate the condition of man, or which was in the least degree honorable to the character of the Deity, whom they pretend to worship. The God of the Christians, as well as that of every other sect, appears to be of their own creating; formed according to their own carnal dispositions, and therefore subject to like passions with themselves. It is no wonder then, that a Being in possession of attributes so discordant as to be constantly at war with each other, threatening his subjects with the most horrid and everlasting punishments, for crimes the most trivial and finite, should strike the imagination of the ignorant and credulous with sensations the most appalling. When I run over in my mind the silly rites and absurd ceremonies recorded in the bible, I am at a loss to account for such monstrous stupidity, and wonder how it was ever possible for the grossest ignorance to be so imposed upon. The vague and contradictory accounts given by Moses, concerning the creation of the world, and of the transactions of his God, must lead the mind of every candid reader to strong suspicions that the whole of that system was a mere fabrication; a heterogenous compound of error, superstition and priestcraft, invented solely for the purpose of awing the people into obedience to the will of kings, potentates, and designing demagogues.

What favorable idea can any rational being have of a God of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, truth, mercy, justice, love and benevolence, whose will is, in the first place, that all his intelligent subjects should be eternally happy; and then, by some unaccountable caprice, in direct opposition to his own inclination, should, for the most trivial offences, punish them with the most excruciating torments, through the endless rounds of eternity? the idea is so shocking, that we cannot for a moment indulge it, but are unavoidably driven to the conclusion, that he is a mere phantom of the brain, a tri-formed monster of the most hedious aspect, existing only in the vain and disturbed imaginations of the ignorant and superstitious. When we consider the matter still farther, does it not seem strange, and altogether irreconcilable, that a perfect law, as that of the bible is pretended to be, coming from the hand of a being of infinite perfection, should, in the hands of weak and puny mortals, be subject to so many various modifications, as to become a pest, rather than a blessing to human society; that it should so far degenerate as to become the cause of the greatest calamities to the human race. To say that it could, is to say that finite bears some proportion to infinite, and therefore capable of affecting it; which is a solecism of the grossest nature.

In vain will the opposer urge, that the corrupt passions of men, in opposition to the precepts and doctrines of the bible, have been the cause of these calamities, when we know, from good authority, that its advocates have in every age, practiced the greatest enormities, and committed the most atrocious crimes in its defence. And what is still more degrading, the very story itself pretends that many of their obscene practices, and barbarous deeds, were sanctioned by their divinity. But I forbear to say more; liberal sentiments are fast spreading through our beloved country; the sun of science has arisen on our horizon; and while our glorious Constitution guarantees to us liberty of conscience,

and the freedom of the press, let the votaries of truth be active in promoting the best good of man, by dispelling the cause of error and superstition, which have so long shrouded the world in mists of delusion. I am happy to say, that even here, in these benighted corners of the earth, many of the worshippers of Nature, and friends to correct principles, are to be found, and were it not for the chain that binds them, would come forth in vindication of the rights of man.

A LIBERAL.

Maine, July 9th, 1828.

MR. EDITOR,—By the favor of a friend, not long since, I had the pleasure of reading a few numbers of the *Correspondent*. Its design, I think, is laudable; the sentiments are, in my opinion, perfectly consistent with nature and sound reasoning. The writers appear to be ready to meet their opponents on fair and honorable ground; disdaining all canting, hypocrisy, intrigue and corruption; their sole wish, to spread light and truth in the paths of darkness and error. With this view of the matter, I have enclosed three dollars, the price of your paper per annum, requesting you to add my name to the list of your patrons, by sending me the *Correspondent* for the present year, commencing with the first number. I also wish you to write to me, whether you can furnish me with all the numbers preceeding the present year, or not, and what will be the cost, as I should like to obtain them, if they are not too expensive.

As I am a friend to liberal sentiments and correct principles, I cannot but heartily desire the spread of them through the medium of your publication. Let them but once obtain solid footing, and man will learn to appreciate his true character. Instead of living in slavish fear, degraded below the beast, he will know himself, a being rational and dignified. He will own himself the legitimate offspring of Nature, delight in his origin, be guided by the light of her countenance, and receive her dictates as the rule of his actions. No more will he crouch beneath the galling chains of ecclesiastical tyranny, or be compelled to pay priestly tythes of his scanty earnings. The axe and the block, the stake and the fire, the rack and the priest, will no more find a place in the history of man. Peace and order, beauty and harmony will usurp the dominion of uproar and confusion, terror and despair; and the effulgence beaming from the face of Nature, will shed a glory round her votaries.

Your's respectfully,

M. L.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1828.

Pious Line of Stages.—It is now ascertained, beyond all dispute, that the projectors of what is called the "Pioneer Line" of stages and steam boats, lately established between Albany and Buffalo, had no other object in view when they originally contemplated the measure, than to make money, and that all the noise they have made, and are now making about the sanctity of the Sabbath, is mere hypocritical cant, resorted to for the purpose of disguising their sinister views. The subject, indeed, is so well understood on the line of the Canal, that every person who

has recently travelled in that direction, unreservedly speak of the "Pioneer Line," as a money speculation, and of its projectors, as a set of unprincipled knaves, who have assumed the mask of religion for the sake of popularity, on which they calculate to rear for themselves, splendid fortunes. The papers published in the same quarter continue, also, to furnish numerous facts and circumstances, which fully corroborate these representations. Among these, "*Priestcraft Exposed*," may be regarded as taking the lead; a rank to which it is well entitled, from the fearless, and able manner in which it unceasingly exposes the attempts now making by the priesthood, to strangle the liberties of the country. The third number is full of interesting matter, which, if our limits would permit, we would transfer into our pages. But we are compelled to confine ourselves to the subjoined extracts:—

To the Editors of Priestcraft Exposed :

GENTLEMEN,—The following dialogue, which recently took place in my hearing, at Rochester, may serve to illustrate the character of the "Pioneer" stage advocates. The dialogue was between a "Pioneer" zealot, and a rational citizen; the former of whom I shall designate by the letter P. and the latter by C.

P. I hope, sir, when you leave town, you will take our stage—it is no longer *respectable* to ride with those who profane the Lord's day.

C. I confess I am not prepared to concede so much, upon the point of respectability. Do you not consider that the wants of the public require stages to run every day?

P. To suppose that, sir, would be open blasphemy. No circumstance whatever, could even justify a violation of the Lord's holy day, by running a stage upon it. Such stages should all be instantly stopped by law.

C. Well, sir, I will suppose a case—

P. I want no case supposed; I tell you *nothing* can excuse a profanation of the Holy Sabbath.

C. Nor can the rules of civility even excuse your present rudeness.

P. Well, sir, go on and suppose your case then.

C. I will then suppose you forty miles from home, and at eleven o'clock on Saturday night, a man confesses to you, and you believe the statement true, that he with another had agreed to burn your house the next night; and that he had repented of the design, but that his bold accomplice would perform the foul deed, unless you, by hastening home should prevent it. The question then is, would you start for home, and travel on Sunday to save your house?

P. By no means. There is nothing in the case that could give me the least excuse. I am not to set the value of my property against the commands of God.

C. Well, sir, suppose under like circumstances, you were informed that your wife and children had been poisoned, by accident, and were not expected to recover?

P. The ways of God, sir, are inscrutable. If he chose such a course in relation to my family, he would do it without absolving me from his command to keep the Sabbath; and therefore I should not violate his

law, by travelling on his holy day, merely to gratify an idle partiality for my wife and children. It is written, "he that forsaketh not father and mother, &c. for my sake is none of mine."

C. Well, sir, this may all be right; but you sometimes preach. Now suppose a Deist were about to harrangue an audience and ridicule all revealed religion, and that you, by travelling upon the Sabbath, could reach the spot assigned, and by your influence over the man prevent his addressing the people as he had proposed, would you suffer this Deist to proceed, or by travelling on Sunday, prevent the profanation of the pulpit?

P. That is a case, sir, widely different from the others. To save lives or property I should not be justified in travelling upon the Sabbath; but to save souls my duty would require me to go. We are commanded to be instant in season and out of season, to preach the word, and my duty to be present upon such an occasion, would be paramount to *all* others—I should certainly go.

C. Well sir, as you have now reached a case that would require you to travel on Sunday, pray, sir, how would you perform the journey, as the Pioneer line of stages does not run upon that day?

P. I would go in that worldly line which constantly violates the express commands of God, because my necessity to serve my Divine Master would require me to do so.

C. But, sir, you told me since this conversation began, that all stage running on the sabbath, should be stopped by law. Let us suppose this done, as you desire, and I again ask, how will you reach the spot were you say the Lord would require you to be?

P. In that case I would obtain an extra coach for the purpose.

C. Do the proprietors of the Pioneer line furnish extra coaches on the Sabbath?

P. By no means, sir; but why should you put that question?

C. Then, sir, who is to furnish you the extra coach?

P. I have heard enough of your blasphemy, sir, and hope you will take the old line stage, for your conversation would be highly offensive to the pious ears of our passengers, whose morals would be in danger from so artful an emissary of the evil one. I have done with you, sir.

"*Sabbath breaking is worse than murder.*"—This sentiment has been so frequently thrown out, both in public and private, that it is no longer a matter of inquiry who conceived such a wicked idea. Yet after all, on *Sunday*, the 1st of June, one of the *Hudson and Erie Line Boats*, travelled all that day freighted with *three Post Coaches*, belonging to the *Pioneer Line* of stages; and in order to evade detection, pieces of rough boards were nailed over the name of the line. To the truth of the above, there are respectable gentlemen who are willing to testify.

Plain Truth.

[At Lewiston the proprietors of the "Pioneer Line," sent a party to the Falls, on Sunday the 6th of July. We are also advised, we believe correctly, that near Canadagua, the "Sabbath" was used for trading off "Pioneer horses." It is also a fact that on the "Sabbath" previous

to the starting of the stages at Lewiston, painting was done to a "Pioneer" coach!! These facts will serve to show the falsity of the pretensions of the advocates of this line.]—*Priestcraft Exposed*

MISCELLANEOUS.

Sacred Dramas.—When the Catholics had the ascendancy in England, the only theatres for the people were churches, and the monks were actors; accordingly, at Easter, plays were frequently got up for popular amusement. Brand cites from the churchwardens' accounts of Reading, set fourth in Coats' history of that town, several items of different sums paid for nails for the sepulchre; "for rosyn to the Resurrection play;" for setting up off poles for the scaffold whereon the plays were performed; for making "a Judas;" for the writing of the plays themselves; and for other expences attending the "getting up" of the representations. Though the subjects exhibited were connected with the incidents commemorated by the festival, yet the most splendid shows must have been in those churches which performed the resurrection at the sepulchre with a full *dramatist personæ* of monks, in dresses according to the characters they assumed.

Mr. Fosdroke gives the "properties" of the sepulchre show belonging to St. Mary Redcliff's church at Bristol, from an original MS. in his possession formerly belonging to Chatterton, viz. "Memorandum:—That master Cannings hath delivered, the 4th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1470, to master Nicolas Pelles, vicar of Redcliff, Moses Conterin, Philip Berthelmew, and John Brown, procurators of Redcliff beforesaid a new Sepulchre, well guilt with fine gold, and a civer thereto; an image of God Almighty rising out of the same sepulchre, with all the ordinance that longeth thereto; that is to say, a lath made of timber and iron work thereto. Item, hereto longeth Heven, made of timber and stained cloths. Item, Hell made of timber and iron work thereto, with Devils the number of thirteen. Item, four knights armed, keeping the Sepulchre with their weapons in their hands; that is to say, two spears, two axes with two *shields*. Item, four pair of Angel's wings, for four Angels, made of timber, and well painted. Item, the Fadre, the crown and visage, the *ball* with a cross upon it, well guilt with fine gold. Item, the Holy Ghost coming out of Heven into the Sepulchre. Item, longeth to the four Angels, four *Perukes*."

St. Patrick.—A life of this Hibernian Saint is sold in London, by Keating & Brown, as an authentic work. How far it is entitled to credit, we leave our readers to judge from the following specimens:—

One Foylge, an idolator, strangled the driver of St. Patrick's chariot, in his seat, wherefore the saint cast his "Holy curse" at Foylge, who pierced thereby, fell dead into hell; but the devil entering the dead body, walked about in it, and seemed as if he were Foylge himself, till one day St. Patrick called at the dead man's house, and asking the family where Foylge was, they answered he was at home, when the saint told them of Foylge's death, and that Satan "had entered into his corpse and occupied it as

his own proper vessel," then St. Patrick gave notice to the devil to leave his lodging in Foylge's body, which he did immediately, and Foylge was buried. Preaching on a journey to 14,000 men, "he first fed them all with spiritual food," then commanding a cow to be killed, with two stags, and a couple of boars, the people ate abundantly, the remnants were gathered up; and "thus with the flesh of five animals, did St. Patrick plentifully feed 14,000 men." Once when he was preaching, by way of a strong argument, he raised to life nineteen dead men, one of whom had been buried for ten years. After that, St. Patrick passing over a river, one of his teeth dropped into the water, and his disciples could not find it till night, when the tooth in the river shone as a radiant star, and being so discovered was brought to St. Patrick, who on that spot built a church, and deposited his tooth beneath the altar. Desiring to pass an impassable river and no boat being at hand, St. Patrick prayed, and dividing the river, made himself and his followers a free passage, then "he blessed the river, and being so blessed, it abounded in fishes above all others." St. Mel being denounced unjustly to St. Patrick, and preferring to prove his innocence by a miracle rather than by an oath, he ploughed up the earth on a certain hill, and took by the ploughshare many and large fishes out of the dry land; thereupon St. Patrick absolved him, but lest St. Mel should continue to work miracles presumptuously, "he bade him that he should thenceforth plough on the land, and fish in the water." St. Patrick had a goat, a thief stole it, and ate it, and when accused, denied it, but the goat bleated in the stomach of the thief, proclaimed the merit of St. Patrick; and to increase the miracle by the sentence of the saint, all the posterity of the man were marked with the beard of a goat. St. Patrick having laboured to convert a tyrant, who laughed him to scorn, he immediately converted the tyrant, against his will, into a fox; which fox went off with a hard run and could never be found. Another time being benighted in the open air, violent rain fell around St. Patrick and his companions, but did not wet them a drop. On the same night, the driver of his chariot could not for the darkness find the horses to re-yoke them, on which St. Patrick, drawing his right hand from his sleeve, and lifting up his fingers, they "shone even as sun-beams, and wonderfully illumining the whole country, turned darkness into light, and night into day—then by the aid of the radiant miracle, the chariot-driver found his steed." After the death of St. Patrick there was no night for twelve days.

Epiphany.—Dudley, the author of "British Monachism, or Manners and Customs of the Monks and Nuns of England," 4to. 1817; gives an account, from Du Cange, of the *Feast of the Star*, or *Office of the Three Kings*, a catholic service performed on this day. "Three priests, clothed as kings, with their servants carrying offerings, met from different directions of the church before the altar. The middle one, who came from the east, pointed with his staff to a star: a dialogue then ensued; and after kissing each other, they began to sing, 'Let us go and inquire;' after which the precentor began a responsory, 'Let the Magi come.' A procession then commenced, and as soon as it began to enter the nave, a crown like a star, hanging before the cross, was lighted up, and

pointed out to the Magi, with 'Behold the star in the east.' This being concluded, two priests, standing at each side of the altar, answered, meekly, 'We are those whom you seek,' and drawing a curtain, showed them a child, whom, falling down, they worshipped. Then the servants made the offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh, which were divided among the priests. The Magi in the mean while continued praying till they dropped asleep; when a boy clothed in an alb, like an angel, addressed them with, 'All things which the prophets said are fulfilled.' The festival concluded with chanting services, &c." Mr. Fosbroke adds, that at Soissons a rope was let down from the roof of the church, to which was annexed an iron circle, having seven tapers, intended to represent Lucifer, or the morning star,

The three persons honored by this service, and called kings, were the three wise men who, in catholic works, are usually denominated the *Three Kings of Cologne*. Cressy tells us, that the empress Helena, who died about the year 328, brought their bodies from the east to Constantinople; from whence they were transferred to Milan, and afterwards, in 1164, on Milan being taken by the emperor Frederick, presented by him to the archbishop of Cologne, who put them in the principal church of that city, "in which place," says Cressy, "they are to this day celebrated with great veneration." Patrick quotes a prayer to them from the Romish service, beginning, "O king Jaspar, king Melchior, king Balthasar;" and he says that the Salisbury Missal states their offerings to have been disposed of in this way:—"Joseph kept of the gold as much as him needed, to pay his tribute to the emperor, and also to keep our lady with while she lay in childbed, and the rest he gave to the poor. The incense he burnt to take off the stench of the stable there as she lay in; and with the myrrh, our lady anointed her child, to keep him from worms and diseases." Patrick gives other prayers to those three kings, one of them from the "Hours of the Virgin," and also quotes this miraculous anecdote; that one John Aprilus, when he was hanged, implored the patronage of the three kings of Cologne; the consequence of which seems to have been, that after he had been hung three days and was cut down, he was found alive; whereupon he came to Cologne half-naked, with his halter about his neck, and returned thanks to his deliverers.

St. Francis, of Paula, was a Calabrian, and at fifteen years old shut himself up in a cave, in a rock on the coast. Before twenty he was joined by two others, and the people built them three cells; the number increased, and so arose the order of friar Minims, which means, the least of the friars. Constant abstinence from flesh, and all food made of milk or eggs, was one of their rules. In 1479, being invited to Sicily, "he was received there as an angel from heaven, wrought miracles, and built several monasteries." He prophesied, held burning coals in his hand without being burnt, restored his nephew to life, cured people of the plague, received the host with a cord about his neck on Maunday Thursday, died on the 2d of April, 1508, aged ninety-one, and was buried till 1562, when the Hugonots burnt his bones with the wood of a crucifix. Besides this, it is related that the elements lost their force

against him ; that he walked upon fire ; entered into a burning oven without harm ; and made a sea voyage on his own cloak, instead of a ship, and had a companion on board with him.

According to another account he was much worried by the devil. Once while he was at prayers the devil called him three times by his own name. Another time he was so possessed by the fiend, that he had no other way to get rid of him, than by stripping and beating himself with a hard cord, crying while he did it, "Thus brother ass thou must be beaten ;" after which he ran into the snow and made seven snowballs, intending to have swallowed them if the devil had not taken his leave. Then a whole parcel of devils came one night, and gave him a grievous beating ; this was because he lodged in a cardinal's palace, and it occasioned him to shift his lodging. Afterwards, when at prayers, he saw upon the roof of the house whole companies of these infernals. He was a bird-fancier. A bird sat singing on a fig-tree by the side of his cell, he called it to him ; the bird came upon his hand, and he said to it—"Sing, my sister, and praise the Lord," and the bird sat singing till he gave it liberty to go away. Going to Venice with his companions, and hearing birds singing in a wood, he proposed to sing the canonical hours, but the monks could not hear themselves for the chanters of the grove, wherefore he entreated the feathered choir to be silent, and they remained so till he gave them liberty to proceed. At another place, when he was preaching, he could not be heard for the swallows, which were making their nests ; he said to them—"Sister swallows, it is time for me to speak ; as you've said enough, be quiet," and so they were. It was customary with him when one of his friars had committed a fault to take off the friar's hood, and throw it into the fire, from whence, after staying there a proper time, he commanded it to be restored to the friar, and the hood was then taken out of the fire without having sustained injury. More to the like effect, and of equal credibility, is related of this saint in the Golden Legend.

Invention of the Cross.—The festival of the Romish church is also in the church of England calendar ; Mr. Audly says, "the word *invention* sometimes signifies, the finding of a thing that was hidden ;" thence the name of this festival, which celebrates the alleged finding of the Cross of Christ, by St. Helena, who is said to have found three crosses on Mount Calvary, but the true one could not be distinguished, till a sick woman being placed on each, was healed by one, which was thereafter pronounced the veritable cross. Mr. Audly quotes, that "the custody of the cross was committed to the Bishop of Jerusalem. Every Easter Sunday it was exposed to view, and pilgrims from all countries were indulged with little pieces of it enchased in gold or gems. What was most astonishing, the sacred wood was never lessened, although it was perpetually diminished, for it possessed a secret power of vegetation." It appears from Ribadeneira, that St. Paulinus says, "the cross being a piece of wood without sense or feeling, yet seemeth to have in it a living and everlasting virtue ; and from that time to this it permitteth itself to be parted and divided to comply with innumerable persons, and yet suffereth no loss or detriment, but remains as entire as if

it had never been cut, so that it can be severed, parted, and divided, for those among whom it is to be distributed, and still remains whole and entire for all those who come to reverence and adore it." There is no other way left to the Romish church to account for the superabundance of the wood of the cross.

Supernaturals Examined.—If God, by length of duration, becomes better or wiser himself, then he does wisely to make his works alterable as his will is; and if his will is alterable, he does so; this is as a wise man, who is growing in wisdom does: but if the same state of perfection be always in God, he does always best; and has one end and design in every different age and duration; and always pursues that one, and the same best means. If God ever determined for moral ends and reasons to interpose, if needful, by a different method, than that of his standard laws; it must be either because he could not foresee the consequences, which is like blundering in the dark; or he foresaw it would be needful; and then it looks like a blunder in the design, and contrivance; or he foreknew and determined his own works should not answer his own ends, without his mending work, which is worst of all. That God, either with or without design, let men alone to go on in their old way, 'till they were ruined, and could not recover themselves, nor he them, without extraordinary interposition of supernatural power, is a supposition injurious to the attributes of the Deity. If God designed, at certain periods of duration, to mend his ordinary, by an extraordinary work to procure from man extraordinary faith and dependence on him; it proves indeed they depend on absolute will, not on absolute wisdom; that by his common laws he suffered man to become totally bad, that he might get honor by mending him, if possible, in an uncommon manner.

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